



BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF CANINE SPORTS ATHLETES

***A holistic approach to coaching
of the canine sports human and
canine athlete because:***

Every Dog Matters!

A proposal to members from the
Central Bedfordshire Canine Trust.

Central Bedfordshire Canine Trust
Reg. Charity 1124683

Canine Sports Academy
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Welcome

As members of the Canine Sports Academy you are being asked to make a decision which will change the way we do things. It is a decision which fundamentally changes how we operate, so it is only right it is you, our members who get the casting vote.

Over the last 12 months a team has been working hard on creating the proposal and plan. We were given a remit by our funders to research and develop a new training syllabus and format for canine sports. One which would be born in Kenworth, but one which the funders could then use as a blueprint for opening and funding more canine sports academies nationwide.

We have worked tirelessly during this time, with experts from canine sports around the world, sports experts, governing bodies and experts from the veterinary profession. Finally we are ready to present to you Canine Sports 365.

What is Canine Sports 365?

Canine Sports 365 is a multi-event, dog and handler (athletes) development programme, which introduces athletes to the fundamental skills of Canine Sports (which are also vital in everyday dog owning life). It is aimed predominantly at 2-24 month old dogs, but the resources and challenges can easily be adapted for use with all dogs and athletes, beginning in canine sports. Canine Sports 365 focuses not only on how fast a dog can complete an Agility course or how far someone can run in Canine Cross Country but also, more importantly, on developing

the technical skills ('how' to run, and 'how' dogs jump, etc.) required to perform at full potential and move like a champion. In addition to technical skills, Canine Sports 365 also looks at an athlete's physical, mental and emotional development, as well as their lifestyle and social development, including that of their dog.

It is a programme we have nicknamed "Puppy to Podium".

The Canine Sports 365 programme is broken down into nine progressive stages. Each stage provides athletes with new and progressively more difficult challenges appropriate to their stage of development. Canine Sports 365 encourages athletes to learn all the skills and events of Canine Sports (including; Obedience, Rally Obedience, Agility, Flyball, Canine Cross Country, Ring Craft, Scent Hurdle Racing and Scent Searching), and reinforces the importance of a good all round skill base. The stages can be seen as similar to progression in other sports, such as the martial arts 'belt system.'

Through Canine Sports 365, the Canine Sports Academy believes young dogs and their handlers will develop the skills and confidence to excel in life; not only in Canine Sports, but in other activities, other life pursuits and be responsible dog owners with well-behaved dogs.

In addition for the first time ever in the world, recognised sports leadership qualifications are now built into the higher stages, meaning we are training the next generation of potential Canine Sports Coaches as they train their dog. For younger participants this also gives them up to 30 UCAS points towards university.

Key Point

From September class sessions would be multi-discipline. This means that two or three coaches would be running a number of activities on the field (e.g. Agility, Flyball, Scent Work, Rally) the whole group would meet together for a warm up game, but then you could decide what activity you wanted to do that week or have a go at all of them. Each week would be Agility as the main, but then two others as well.

Why does the dog and handler have to do a range of canine sports disciplines to complete Canine Sports 365, especially where they may only want to participate in one of these disciplines?

Canine Sports 365 is a multi-skills/multi events based programme designed to develop the all-round dog and athlete.

The Canine Sports Academy believes that through Canine Sports 365, athletes will have a greater choice of events and sports in which to participate and succeed with their dog, both now and later on in life. Developing a better conditioned athlete and dog will increase the athlete's performance and minimise the likelihood of injury. It builds cross training into the main programme structure.

The athlete will still be encouraged to participate and progress in those disciplines they and their dog enjoy the most, at the same time as allowing them to experience new and exciting challenges and activities from other canine sports.

This broad range of activities and skills will help build the dog and athletes in a range

of transferable skills. In addition and more importantly it will allow the dog, handler and coaching team a more fun, varied and enriching programme which they will all get greater enjoyment and benefit from.

If coaches specialise athlete's training too early, there is a greater chance the athlete can develop repetition related injuries. This is particularly an issue while dogs are growing, such as when they are going through growth changes, as this may affect their physical development.

This is also true of junior athletes taking part with their dog, children are also undergoing physical development changes such as those during puberty which affects their ability levels. That is why Canine Sports 365 has athlete age restrictions in place on some development stages.

To ensure you have enough time to experience all the different disciplines of a session, we have extended session times for each stage, giving you longer training sessions. Also sessions will be repeated two consecutive weeks, meaning if you didn't get a chance to do something the first week or if you want more practice, you will have the opportunity the following week.

Certificates will be issued as dogs complete each of the nine stages. Rosettes for key stages and proper medals for Bronze, Silver and Gold.

For the first three stages (developing) dogs will need to pass the basics applicable to all canine sports to get their certificates. For the next three stages they will just need to do it in three of the canine sports of their choice (Triathlon),

and the final stages in two of their chosen canine sports (Biathlon).

Key Point

Dogs will be grouped in sessions based on the stage they have completed. Courses are being removed. Instead four "terms" a year will be scheduled, at the end of each term any certificates achieved will be awarded. However your dog can move up to the next level whenever they are ready, even if it is in-between terms.

Will session times change?

Yes. Session times will be longer, giving more time for advanced levels who by their nature do more individual exercises. But we have also created a break between sessions to avoid any late starts by the previous class over running.

Session times will include warm ups and cool downs.

They will be as follows:

Developing Group

Red-Green Stages 10.30am – 11.30am

Practicing Group

Blue – Black Stages 12 noon – 1.30pm

Emerging Group

Bronze-Gold Stages 2.00pm – 4.00pm

What group will we start in?

Completely new members will still have a 9 week course during which they will be graded and then join the appropriate level session on completion.

Existing members will be assessed over the weeks before September and assigned a group, although we envisage it will work

out to be the closest group to your current start time.

What about cost?

As we said we are doing away with courses. We wanted to remove the hassle of having to keep enrolling every few weeks and also allow people to progress into the next level when their dog was ready, not just when the course ended.

For this reason course fees are being replaced by membership, and we have substantially reduced fees by over 50%!!

As members you will have three different options:

Pay As You Go

£25 a year fee (payable September) and then £5 per dog, per session, and £5 per seminar/event. This option is best suited to the very occasional member or a supporter.

Monthly

£25 one off joining fee, then £12 a month (Feb –Nov) per dog (as many handlers as you like). This is billed on the 1st of each month and can be paid online or by cash. You can attend as many sessions as you like and get the full member benefits included in that fee. There is no contract, you just pay monthly in advance, and when it ends, there is no obligation to renew.

If you have a month or more off, you can just restart your monthly membership when you are ready and return to sessions.

Six Month / Yearly Membership

Six monthly or Yearly membership is the most convenient and cheapest membership option! No joining fee.

Six monthly membership is only £65. Payable 1st September and 1st March. It can be paid online or by cash. You can attend as many sessions as you like and get full member benefits. There is no contract, you just pay for the six months in advance, and when it ends, there is no obligation to renew.

Yearly membership works the same as six monthly membership, is £120 payable 1st September. This means our complete yearly membership now works out at only the price of two courses at current rates.

Extra Dog Discount

You can add extra dogs from the same household for 50% discount onto any of our new membership options.

What are the member benefits?

Included in all membership fees (except pay as you go) is:

- As many Sunday Canine Sports sessions with that dog and/or different handlers as you like.
- As many of the twice weekly FidoFitness sessions as you like with that dog (handler can change).
- Two seminar days, and dog first aid course each year, included (one place per dog).
- Free entry for that dog to the annual Canine Sports Games.

Is FidoFitness now included?

Yes. FidoFitness has been a pilot project with the Department of Health, Change 4 Life campaign. It focuses on dog and handlers all round fitness and health.

It has been a great success. However we want FidoFitness participants to be able to access canine sports activities and for canine sports participants to be able to access FidoFitness.

Many participants already do both, but under the current structure it makes it costly and means they have to commit to a course of an extra Tuesday night. However all participants I am sure can tell you the benefits to them and their dogs of attending both or a mix of sessions.

So we have now included it all in the one membership fee, you don't have to pay extra or separately.

Sunday Canine Sports participants can attend FidoFitness at no extra cost, and FidoFitness participants can attend Canine Sports 365 at no extra cost. Whether it is once, monthly, fortnightly or every week.

FidoFitness runs weekly on a Tuesday night at Kensworth Village Hall 6.30pm – 8pm. Two Tuesdays a month are indoors, the others outdoors.

We have another FidoFitness group (if this plan goes ahead) which will open in Houghton Regis on a Thursday 6.30pm – 8.00pm. All members will be able to access this group as well, included in their membership.

This change opens up all our activities to all our members, without additional costs. Meaning members who want to take part in extra activities can.

What about obedience classes?

It has been confirmed by the trust that Canine Sports Academy membership plans will not cover Wednesday night Obedience classes as these are run by a separate committee of the trust, they will still have their own arrangements in place for course fees and bookings.

However if the plan goes ahead, they have indicated they will review a "top up fee" to enable academy members to attend obedience classes. However members should assume and vote currently on the basis that obedience will not be included in the academy membership price.

What about wet weather credits or bad weather?

Firstly from October – March Sunday sessions will be indoors, following last year's successful pilot. Meaning we can more easily guarantee class provision over the worse of winter.

However we live in Britain, so we are always going to be at the mercy of the British weather!

With pay as you go membership, credits are no longer a problem because you would just be paying each time you attended.

If you opted for monthly, six monthly or yearly membership, you will notice that it is a major saving of over 50% of what course fees would be currently based on an average year with missed weeks.

We have also built in that fees are payable effectively 10 months of the year. Also as we have opened up two weekly

FidoFitness sessions per week into the membership and arranged winter hall cover, we are sure you will agree that we have put together a very good priced package for our members even if the weather did prevent some Sundays due to wet weather. For this reason monthly, six monthly and yearly memberships are non-refundable and wet weather credits will no longer be issued.

Will there be as many training weeks a year?

The short answer is yes. Based on the yearly average from the last five years the number of training weeks will not drop. The provision of the winter accommodation has added to the number of weeks in fact.

However we have listened to our members and as from September any Sunday of a Bank Holiday will be no training, as well as the normal Xmas break and a two week summer break. FidoFitness will run all year round except the Xmas and summer break.

So yes the same number of weeks a year will be scheduled for sessions, but in a way which has adapted to miss bank holiday weekends, where the majority of members have other plans.

We will continue to finish the second week of December and restart the second week of January. This is also a reason why we have worked it out so that December and January are non-payable months on our monthly plan (or equivalent reduction on other plans), and to avoid members having to pay membership fees over a typically expensive time of year.

Is it too good to be true?

The team behind the proposal have really worked hard to come up with a great package for members.

We know it won't be to every bodies liking, we know that some people will use their membership more than others and we know that we have had a number of changes recently members have had to adjust to.

But all the changes to date have been to get us ready for this one and get new activities underway. We have come up with a simple and realistic membership package and session structure which will reduce admin (and admin costs) but will also in some degree or variation be a good deal for the majority, if not all our members.

If prices have come down that much, could they go up?

It is important to remember that the Central Bedfordshire Canine Trust and thus by default the Canine Sports Academy is a charity. We are not hell bent on making profits, simply to cover costs and be able to invest in new equipment, projects, etc.

The biggest problem we have always had is irregularity. By the nature of what we do attendance is higher in particular seasons of the year, costs also vary over the year. To date we have always had to keep course fees more expensive than we would have liked, simply because we never knew what bad winter or low attendance might hit us in the next course.

What we have tried to do instead, is take a step back and look at all our activities and events, and set a budget for the year ahead. This is made easier now we have the winter accommodation.

We would much rather have a system where members paid less but in a way which we can estimate and budget for the year ahead. This is what we have achieved by proposing the switch to this new structure.

We can never say membership won't go up and it would be wrong of us to make that promise. However that is not our intention and of course you are not tied into any kind of contract so if it did, you can make your own decision whether to renew your membership.

What we have done in this proposal is change the regulations, so that if a membership increase was proposed or considered necessary it would have to be agreed by members themselves in June each year to come into effect the following September. This is one of a number of ways members are being given more of a say over the way the academy is operated under this plan.

What are we being asked?

Every current member is being asked to vote in response to this question:

"Should the Canine Sports Academy adopt the Canine Sports 365 programme and session structure? Which would mean also adopting the proposed new membership fee structure from 1st September 2015."

You will be able to answer "Yes" or "No".

Ballot papers can be returned at sessions or via post to the address printed on the ballot paper. Ballots must be received by 1st July 2015.

The majority result of the ballot will be the final member's decision. As a formality the Board of Trustees of the Central Bedfordshire Canine Trust will meet to ratify the vote of members, and pass the changes into the regulations of the trust. These will be known as the "UK Canine Sports Authority Regulations 2015". The final stage will be the trusts solicitors who will present the already drafted new Deed of Trust to our funders, Central Bedfordshire Council and the Charity Commission. All these stages will be completed (if voted in favour) ready for the 1st September 2015.

It is important to remember however that although these formalities will occur after the vote, it will be the vote and opinion of the membership which will decide if this proposal goes ahead. Your opinion, your voice, your academy, your vote!

Summary

The majority of our members want to have fun with their dogs and to have fun themselves. We have set out to create a new session structure and programme which lets people and their dogs have maximum fun!

A varied and creative session programme, reduced administration and cheaper session fees. We have set out to open up and streamline our other activities so as many people as possible can take part and vary what they do. We are focused on increasing participation and providing those already participating with a fun and progressive class structure.

We have done the hard work, all you need to do is tick "Yes" or "No" and return your ballot paper.